

exchange a few words. And we saw the guards, headed by Belokos, beat them, and the armed convoy take them, one after another, to the gallows.

The death row was the last thing I saw before I was transferred to the Central Penitentiary of Alexandrovsk, one of the largest Siberian forced labor prisons.

THE LONG ROAD

The transfer to Siberia found me indifferent. It did not matter much to me where I served the rest of my term. I left Ekaterinoslav in chains, but my papers indicated permission to wear glasses.

It took us six or seven weeks to get from Ekaterinoslav to Irkutsk. The party included common criminals and politicals, all chained, all in the same ragged garb. Most of the time I traveled with Rogovsky, a likable fellow who could discuss books and politics, recite poetry, and hum prisoner songs. We pooled our meager resources. My friends had succeeded in smuggling two five-ruble gold pieces into the Ekaterinoslav prison for me, and I kept them hidden in lumps of sugar. Rogovsky had a few small coins in the cloth buttons of his clothes. With five kopeks a day to add to the prison ration, we were not hungry.

The guards were not unkind. Only on one long leg of the journey did we get a convoy hostile to the prisoners, because of trouble with the preceding party. In revenge, the soldiers emptied the bucket of drinking water in the prisoners' coach. The day was hot and the walls and roof of the car were sizzling. This was the nearest to torture I had ever suffered or witnessed. Personally I could stand thirst and heat fairly well, but some prisoners fainted and others became delirious. The guards were obviously trying to provoke a riot. But the "Ivans" saw through their game and kept the party under control.

As the party proceeded eastward, its composition began to change. The crowd of chained prisoners was joined by bearded muzhiks deported without trial for agrarian unrest. After the Urals, strange characters joined the convoy—vagabonds and convicts who had been settled in Siberia, had escaped from the settlement, and been caught and shipped back. When caught, most of them refused to give their names and pretended to have forgotten everything. The practice was to resettle such nameless tramps as "Ivans without Memory." When they escaped for the second time, they proudly carried their last papers in which they were registered under this nickname. Most of them were good-humored, talkative people. They knew every prison in Siberia and east Russia; the more experienced among them knew